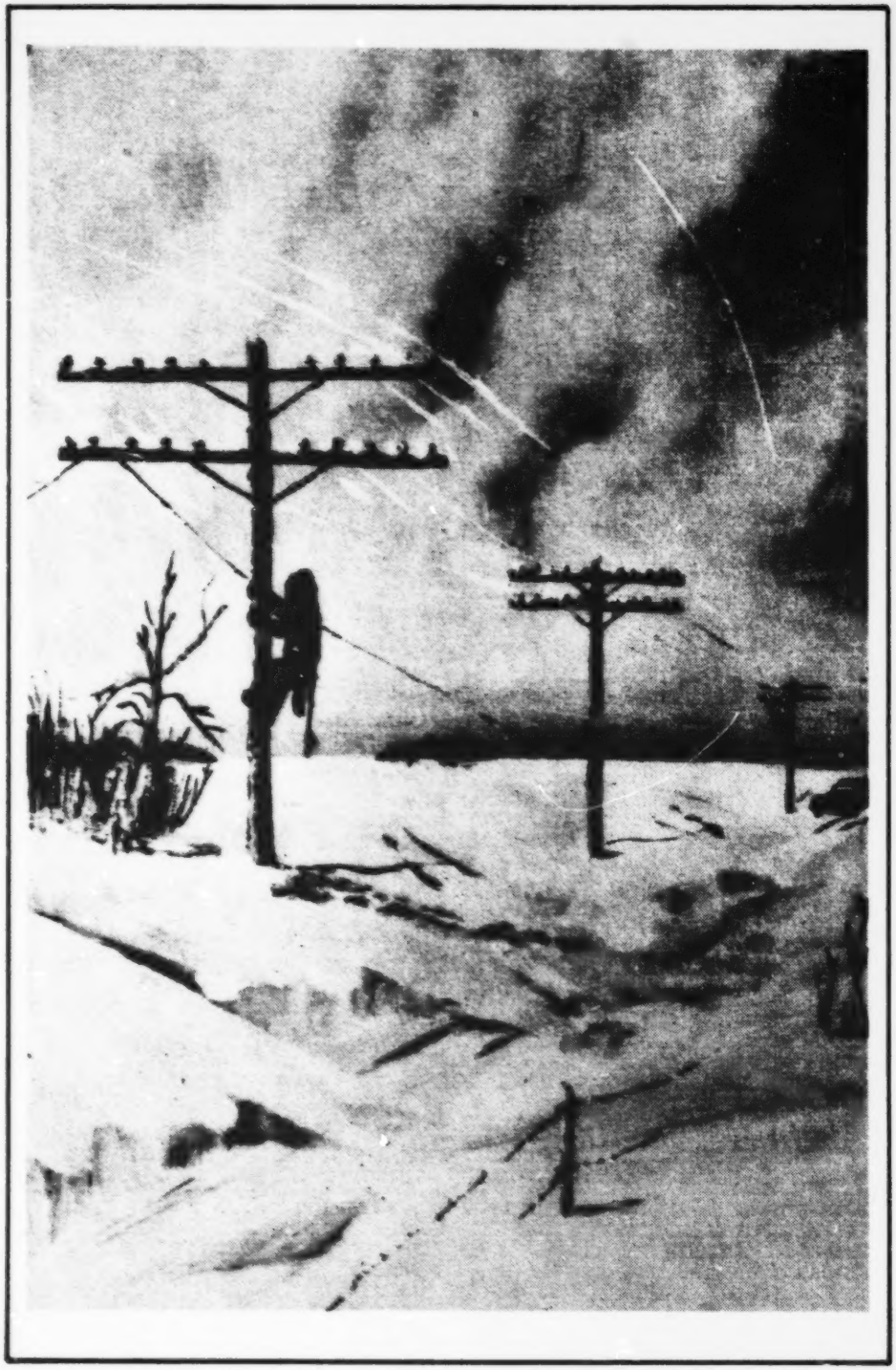
Department
of Telephones
Saskatchewan

Annual Report
1984

Saskatchewan



86-01689/

About the cover

The cover is a painting by J. Brass honoring all those dedicated linemen who provided service during adverse weather conditions. "They were special".

Annual Report

DEPARTMENT OF TELEPHONES
Province of Saskatchewan
Calendar year 1984

Hon. Gordon G. Currie
Minister

Dr. A. J. Y. Guy
Deputy Minister

CONTENTS

	Page
Administration	6
Assimilation Program	10
Assimilations	6
Circuit Grant	8
Debentures	12
Extensions	7
Financial Activities	12
Maintenance Grant	7
Operational Assistance	9
Report at a Glance	5
Short-Term Loans	13
Statistical Summary	13

Hon. Gordon G. Currie
Minister of Telephones

REGINA, Saskatchewan,
June 30, 1985.

TO HIS HONOUR

The Honourable F. W. Johnson,

Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Saskatchewan.

Sir:

I have the honour to submit herewith, the report of the Department of Telephones covering the activities of the rural telephone systems in the province for the calendar year 1984.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Gordon Currie

Gordon G. Currie,
Minister of Telephones.

1984 Report at a Glance

- Under the Voluntary Assimilation Program during 1984, six Rural Telephone Companies, with 255 subscribers joined SaskTel making a total of 659 companies with over 46,783 subscribers assimilated in the eight years of the program.

- Rural telephone company spending totalled $139,614 down 21% from the previous year.

- Rural telephone companies buried 10 route kilometers (6 miles) of wire and cable in 1984.

- Grants of $6,293 were paid to rural companies by SaskTel, $2,500 in the form of Circuit Grants for buried cable and $3,793 for Maintenance Grants.

- As of 1984, all existing rural telephone companies are debt free.

Administration

Rural telephone companies historically were responsible for providing telephone service to Saskatchewan's farming population. During the last 15 years, 753 companies have voluntarily given the responsibility for their serving area to SaskTel. Less than 4% of the farms are now served by Rural Companies.

Under Section 5 of The Telephone Department Act, SaskTel administers The Rural Telephone Act and gives advice and guidance to rural companies for constructing and maintaining their plant to approved standards.

During 1984 SaskTel provided financial guidance and technical assistance to rural companies, as well as administrative help in winding up the companies that have joined SaskTel. Meetings were held with subscribers and boards of companies interested in joining SaskTel under the Voluntary Assimilation Program.

Companies Assimilated During Year - 1984

Name	Connecting point	Number of Subscribers	Assim Date
East Carlyle	Carlyle	8	Jan. 4/84
Plymouth	Watrous	19	March 19/84
Kendalton	Wapella	11	April 13/84
Phoenix	Wapella	22	April 13/84
Elfros	Elfros	151	May 1/84
South Radisson	Radisson	44	June 16/84
		255	

Extensions to Plant

Rural telephone companies extended their plant to serve 13 new subscribers during 1984. As a result of SaskTel's assimilation program this has steadily decreased from 706 new subscribers in 1976, to 16 in 1983.

Grants Program

In 1960, a program of grants was introduced providing funds to rural telephone companies that would assist and encourage them to upgrade the quality and reliability of the telephone service they provided to their subscribers.

Instrument Grant - 1960 to 1974

$989,483 was paid to provide dial-operated telephones free of charge in exchange for the magneto telephones.

Pole Grant - 1960 to 1974

Approximately $1,700,000 was paid to assist in the purchase of over 700,000 treated poles.

Maintenance Grant - 1960 to present

An annual grant of $2.50 per subscriber is paid to rural companies who maintain their plant to approved standards.

The following table indicates the assistance provided by the Maintenance Grant since 1960:

Year	Number of Companies Receiving Grant	Number of Subscribers Served By These Companies	Amount of Grants Approved
1960	124	14,421	$ 17,190
1961	174	19,720	43,503
1962	226	22,926	81,305
1963	306	29,002	72,505
1964	426	35,973	89,932
1965	530	41,537	103,842
1966	648	45,573	113,933
1967	714	48,036	120,090
1968	736	48,937	122,342
1969	754	49,320	123,300
1970	759	49,465	123,663
1971	771	49,533	123,833
1972	759	50,053	125,133
1973	747	49,812	124,530
1974	548	36,403	91,008
1975	614	41,130	102,825
1976	598	41,940	104,850
1977	216	12,993	32,482
1978	139	7,973	19,933*
1979	118	5,398	13,495*
1980	88	4,169	10,423*
1981	64	2,761	6,903*
1982	45	1,837	4,593*
1983	44	1,637	4,093*
1984	40	1,517	3,793*
* Paid by SaskTel			$ 1,779,499

Circuit Grant - 1965 to present

The circuit grant was started in 1965 when reliable cable became available and replaced pole line construction almost immediately. It reduced the number of above-ground obstacles from an average of 25 poles per mile to an average of two pedestals per mile.

The average number of subscribers per line has also been reduced from over eight in 1965 to just under three in 1984.

Service disruptions due to the weather and damage to overhead lines caused by vehicles with high loads has been eliminated.

The table below indicates the amount of financial assistance provided by the Circuit Grant since 1965:

Year	Number of Companies Receiving Grant	Route Kilometers	Route Miles	Circuit Kilometers	Circuit Miles	Amount of Grants Approved
1965	5	24	(15)	354	(220)	$ 725
1966	23	148	(92)	1,310	(814)	23,457
1967	53	417	(259)	3,146	(1,955)	56,264
1968	70	484	(301)	3,917	(2,434)	68,389
1969	68	504	(313)	3,256	(2,023)	58,414
1970	75	766	(476)	5,855	(3,638)	102,850
1971	120	954	(593)	5,659	(3,516)	102,734
1972	155	1,550	(963)	7,739	(4,809)	202,020
1973	233	2,723	(1,692)	13,378	(8,313)	564,952
1974	249	4,337	(2,695)	18,841	(11,707)	955,930
1975	309	5,996	(3,726)	20,509	(12,744)	1,221,618
1976	271	4,213	(2,618)	16,066	(9,983)	878,817
1977	82	1,365	(848)	4,790	(2,976)	251,433
1978	57	940	(584)	2,908	(1,807)	172,200*
1979	30	283	(176)	986	(613)	65,283*
1980	15	72	(45)	166	(103)	17,993*
1981	13	41	(25)	154	(95)	11,237*
1982	9	55	(34)	180	(111)	17,014*
1983	7	27	(17)	61	(38)	9,111*
1984	5	10	(6)	24	(15)	2,450*
		24,909	(15,478)	109,299	(67,914)	$ 4,782,891

* Paid by SaskTel

Operational Assistance to Rural Telephone Companies

There were 51 rural telephone companies still in operation at the beginning of 1984 and the department staff continued to offer technical advice and assistance as in the past.

Five rural companies placed 10 kilometers (6 miles) of buried underground facilities, with the department generally arranging for the material, cable, and providing supervisory help. SaskTel provided the engineering at no charge.

Fifteen general meetings were attended concerning assimilation, and over 30 board meetings were held with the rural representative to discuss cable projects and the Voluntary Assimilation Program.

An annual inspection of the plant of rural telephone companies was made for those companies applying for the maintenance grant. A report of the inspection was delivered to the secretary of each rural company. The annual financial report of each rural company was reviewed and recorded. Details from the statements are included in this report.

The Voluntary Assimilation Program

Responding to requests from rural telephone companies and the Association of Rural Telephone Companies, SaskTel, in 1976, announced two new programs.

The Voluntary Assimilation Program allows any rural telephone company to voluntarily give the responsibility for providing telephone service in its area to SaskTel. The Rural Service Improvement Program essentially provided for all rural telephone plants in the province to be buried with no more than four subscribers per circuit.

In the 10 years prior to 1976, SaskTel's Unserved Area Program assisted rural companies greatly by burying cables to pockets of farmers situated beyond the rural company serving area, allowing rural companies along the cable routes to rent cable pairs or in some instances to join SaskTel. Over 100 rural companies joined SaskTel during that period with 659 companies joining SaskTel in the last eight years.

The following indicates rural companies assimilated in the past by SaskTel:

Year	Number of Companies	Number of Subscribers
1967	1	5
1968	8	96
1969	2	25
1970	-	-
1971	8	225
1972	-	-
1973	8	528
1974	22	677
1975	27	715
1976	29	1,570
1977	460	33,603
1978	69	4,545
1979	32	3,041
1980	35	2,059
1981	26	1,392
1982	30	1,666
1983	1	222
1984	6	255

At year end there were no applications for assimilation. Of the remaining 45 companies, 35 have their facilities totally buried and are providing a good level of service to their subscribers.

SaskTel, during the last seven years, has hired over 50 former linemen of rural telephone companies, fulfilling one of the commitments made in 1976.

The program is voluntary and is open to all rural telephone companies to apply for assimilation, which requires a 60 percent affirmative majority of the votes cast at a special meeting of the rural telephone company.

Rural Service Improvement Program

Benefits

- Reduction in the Number of Subscribers on a Circuit - SaskTel will re-design, and where necessary re-build, rural facilities initially to provide for not more than four subscribers per circuit.

- Reduced Service Interruption - All circuits will be buried reducing service disruptions due to weather disturbances.

- Regular Maintenance - SaskTel employees will have end-to-end responsibility for rural facilities.

- Common Rate Schedule - SaskTel's rate schedule for rural subscribers will apply. The "Special Levy Tax," where it now applies, will be discontinued.

- Individual Line Service - Private lines will be available to rural subscribers, subject to additional charges.

- New Subscribers - When re-designing the circuits, SaskTel will make provision for the inclusion of residents of the area who are without service.

Conditions

- Existing rural company subscribers will be provided with multi-party line service without a service connection charge.

- Individual line service, if requested at the time of canvassing, will be available to existing rural subscribers at standard SaskTel tariff rates plus construction charges, less a credit of up to $400.

- New subscribers will be required to pay standard service connection charges (presently $135) for multi-party service. New subscribers for individual line service will be required to pay standard SaskTel tariff rates and construction charges.

- SaskTel will assume all liabilities and assets of a rural telephone company that is assimilated. This includes all telephone sets, poles and cable.

- Easements are to be provided to SaskTel at no charge.

Financial Activities of Rural Telephone Companies

Authorization to regulate the operation of rural telephone companies by the Department of Telephones is provided under The Telephone Department Act. In practice the major area of regulation is the control of funds raised by the telephone tax. Spending of tax proceeds must receive the approval of the Department.

The following table shows the number of companies using special levy funds and the special account receipts and expenditures for each of the last 13 years.

Year	Number of Companies	Special Account Proceeds	Amount Expended
1972	576	$ 2,272,756	$ 2,195,752
1973	540	3,029,865	2,884,522
1974	511	3,436,179	3,320,900
1975	496	4,698,701	4,617,941
1976	505	5,325,494	5,242,792
1977	135	1,136,952	1,259,317
1978	86	641,899	689,592
1979	70	351,230	350,456
1980	48	200,708	274,766
1981	34	104,909	132,410
1982	11	28,918	36,694
1983	7	26,845	37,272
1984	5	11,704	9,582
		$ 21,266,160	$ 21,051,996

Under Section 35 of The Rural Telephone Act, rural telephone companies may elect to exempt from telephone tax, any parcel that is not a run-off parcel. At year end, 23 companies were operating under this practice.

Special Account funds in banks or credit unions at December 31, 1984 was $21,940.00. This is an increase of $7,838.00 from last year.

Debentures

Total Debentures Issued (Since Incorporation)	$ 20,420,153
Less: Debentures of Companies Dissolved	$ 19,978,153
Debentures Issued (Current Operating Companies) as at December 31, 1984	$ 442,000
Amount of Debenture Principal Unpaid as at December 31, 1984	$ Nil

Short-Term Loans

Short-Term Loans Authorized	$	6,301,334
Less: Short-Term Loans of Companies Dissolved	$	6,023,434
Short-Term Loans Authorized (Current Operating Companies) as at December 31, 1984	$	277,900
Total Loan Principal Unpaid as at December 31, 1984	$	Nil

Summary of Statistical Returns From Rural Telephone Companies

Size of Companies	Number of Companies		Number of Telephones (All Companies)	
	1984	1983	1984	1983
1 - 10 Telephones	9	10	71	80
11 - 25	13	15	205	239
26 - 50	10	12	375	439
51 - 100	9	9	566	569
101 - 200	4	5	505	670
	45	51	1,722	1,997

Telephones

	1984	1983
Farm	1,665	1,915
Residence	25	35
Business	30	47
	1,722	1,997

Route Kilometers (Miles)

	1984		1983	
Poles	71	(43.8)	180	(111)
Underground Wire and Cable	* 1,410	(870)	* 1,482	(914)

* Lower than total amount buried due to rural companies becoming part of SaskTel.

Debentures and Short-Term Loans

	1984	1983
Debentures Issued (Current Operating Companies)	$ 442,000*	$ 550,600*
Debenture Principal Unpaid	Nil	Nil
Short-Term Loans Authorized (Current Operating Companies)	$ 277,900*	$ 279,400*
Short-Term Loan Principal Unpaid	Nil	$ 3,000

* Reduced due to winding up of companies

Receipts and Expenditures

	1984	1983
Rentals Received	$ 90,257	$ 95,617
Total Receipts	$ 139,039	$ 174,742
Total Expenditures	$ 130,614	$ 176,187

PROVINCE OF SASKATCHEWAN
ANNUAL REPORT OF RURAL TELEPHONE COMPANIES
As at December 31, 1984

Name of Company	Connecting Point	Short Term Loans Issued	Short Term Loans Unpaid	Rental Received	Total Receipts	Total Expenditures	Kilometers Open Wire Route	Kilometers Open Wire Circuit	Kilometers Buried Route	Kilometers Buried Circuit	No. of Telephones Farms	No. of Telephones Res.	No. of Telephones Bus.	No. of Telephones Total
Arm	Craik	$ —	$ —	$ 675	$ 879	$ 579	—	—	7	35	8	—	—	8
Balcarres West	Balcarres	—	—	560	675	490	—	—	9	23	14	—	—	14
O Bellevue	Rouleau	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11	18	7	—	—	7
Burdick	Moose Jaw	6,500	—	4,599	5,046	5,383	2	2	29	161	36	—	—	36
City View	Regina	—	—	668	669	821	2	2	4	11	8	3	—	11
Crooked Lake	Broadview	5,000	—	425	515	562	—	—	17	48	16	—	—	16
East Borden	Borden	—	—	1,880	3,154	7,541	—	—	76	295	53	—	—	53
Esk	Lanigan	—	—	936	1,014	807	—	—	9	17	12	—	—	12
Frenchman's Butte	Paradise Hill	—	—	351	405	431	16	16	—	—	16	—	—	16
Glendale	Balcarres	—	—	430	491	473	—	—	5	6	8	—	—	8
Grand Bend	Weyburn	15,000	—	2,429	3,280	3,291	—	—	41	99	43	—	—	43
Hanley	Hanley	—	—	872	1,046	872	—	—	34	129	30	—	1	31
Heward	Stoughton	7,000	—	2,519	3,007	2,560	—	—	46	96	39	2	—	41
Ituna	Ituna	43,000	—	5,853	7,772	5,886	—	—	88	313	97	11	4	112
Kilmory	Watrous	—	—	931	1,175	1,210	—	—	14	140	15	—	1	16
Kisbey	Kisbey	12,700	—	3,516	9,275	8,127	—	—	102	426	75	—	—	75
Leo	Hanley	—	—	911	994	652	—	—	27	150	21	4	—	25
Loreburn	Loreburn	—	—	2,415	3,757	2,647	—	—	63	240	52	—	—	52
McTaggart-Weyburn	Weyburn	10,000	—	3,887	6,998	4,414	—	—	52	95	64	—	—	64
Midale	Midale	61,900	—	6,100	7,118	6,957	6	6	101	308	122	—	2	124
Moose Jaw Enterprise	Moose Jaw	—	—	602	765	852	—	—	39	99	15	—	—	15
North Estevan	Estevan	—	—	2,466	6,001	3,134	—	—	10	21	37	—	—	37
North Weyburn	Weyburn	—	—	1,070	3,903	3,461	—	—	74	234	34	—	1	35
Paynton	Paynton	25,000	—	4,942	7,816	7,927	—	—	46	158	88	—	6	94
Pelly	Pelly	—	—	2,430	3,897	2,309	1	1	29	42	62	—	—	62
Pibroch	Regina	—	—	4,998	7,194	7,409	—	—	21	40	49	4	3	56
Porcupine	Porcupine Plain	—	—	405	566	562	—	—	31	96	17	—	—	17
Prairie Lily	Rouleau	24,500	—	855	1,484	1,013	—	—	5	21	18	—	—	18
Prairieville	Swift Current	—	—	1,004	1,300	1,075	—	—	6	9	15	—	—	15
Redrows	Balcarres	—	—	320	368	308	—	—	10	14	8	—	—	8
O Ridgedale	Ridgedale	58,000	—	9,842	18,051	17,013	—	—	76	224	134	—	1	135
Riverside	Rouleau	—	—	—	—	—	10	10	—	—	5	—	—	5
Rose Plains	Regina	—	—	2,702	3,341	2,682	2	2	5	6	35	—	5	40
Rudolph	Rouleau	—	—	—	184	2,856	5	5	14	40	16	—	—	16
St. Boswells	Hodgeville	4,500	—	931	2,444	2,508	—	—	32	81	34	—	—	34
Somme	Porcupine Plain	2,000	—	3,699	5,102	5,599	—	—	88	275	134	—	—	134
South Antler	Carnduff	—	—	39[illegible]	448	305	—	—	10	27	9	—	—	9
South West Tyvan	Francis	2,800	—	528	653	518	1	1	7	13	7	—	—	7
South Weyburn	Weyburn	—	—	4,701	6,314	5,827	—	—	31	48	59	—	—	59
Sunny South	Indian Head	—	—	225	408	335	8	8	—	—	9	—	—	9
Truax Valley	Avonlea	—	—	320	381	221	11	11	2	3	10	—	—	10
Tullymet	Balcarres	—	—	2,380	2,866	2,972	—	—	41	128	43	—	1	44
Watrous	Watrous	—	—	—	197	756	—	—	23	122	10	—	4	14
Wideawake	Indian Head	2,000	—	2,206	2,959	2,139	5	5	25	125	32	—	—	32
Wilcox Mutual	Wilcox	—	—	3,283	5,373	5,590	—	—	48	142	49	1	1	51
TOTAL: (45 Companies)		$ 277,900	$ —	$ 90,257	$ 139,039	$ 130,614	71	71	1,410	4,576	1,686	28	30	1,722

O Statistics not available